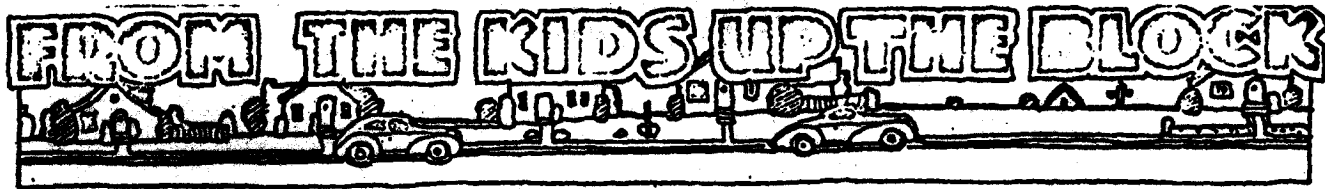


NONE/UNKNOWN
THE SOUND
Seattle, Washington
March 1972



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CIA HOOKED

E. B. del Rosario
Wash.-Ala. Regional Coordinator - V.V.A.W.

Part One

In any given weekend night at the Constellation Bar and Restaurant, even the most casual tourist may find himself rubbing elbows with agents of half a dozen countries. These agents go under various official titles and capacities, such as "information specialists," "rural development technician," or "embassy official," but most all of them can be placed into one occupational category - espionage. The main attraction of the Constellation is the agents, and not the music or the food; for at Suzanne's down the road, one can get better, especially food. But since there's not much happening in Vientiane, and there's few places to go to hide, the Constellation becomes the center of activity on weekends. After official working hours, this little city by the Mekhong River tries to become a miniature Saigon but without the wartime conditions of its bigger sister.

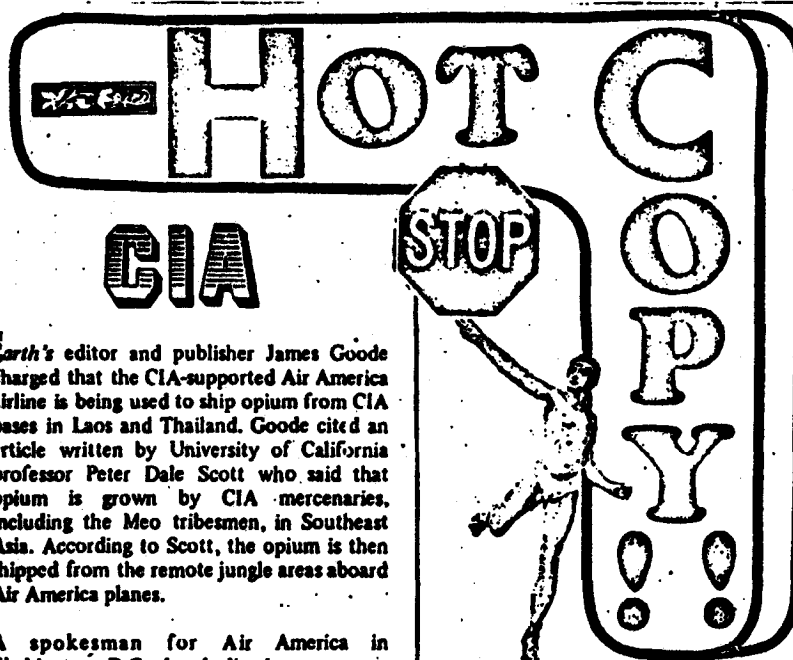
While the resident agents are pursuing the music, lights and slenderly built Lao "puying," another group of men are busy under bright flood lights at Wattay Airport, working hurriedly, but competently, to prepare silver unmarked airplanes for early morning flights. At the ramps of Air America and Continental Air Services, Filipino, Chinese and Thai mechanics are checking, adjusting, tuning and reassembling every functional part of the aircraft which must carry people and cargo over the entire length of Laos. One by one, the DC-3's, C-46's, C-123's, Caribous, Pilatus, Porters and Helio Couriers are checked and double checked, for these planes must fly over some of the most primitive terrain and under primitive conditions for four to ten hours daily. As each aircraft is released by the flight mechanics, other men take over the preparation of the plane. Lao laborers hump hundred-pound sacks of rice or cornmeal up the inclined belly of the C-46's or cargo of military wares into the Caribous and C-123's.

Before the first rays of sunlight break on the cheeks of Buddhist monasteries, pilots are receiving their briefings and assignments from the operations sections. "Captina, you're on Sixty Zulu this morning. Your DZ's are Sixty-three, Eleven, Five and One-Seven-Three. Weather is overcast at four thousand, broken at twenty-five hundred. Double-check your recognition signal at Site Five . . . the Pathet Lao took Site Thirteen last night." "Jim, take Fourteen Tango to Lima Two-five and pick up customer cargo. Take off is at Zero-Six-Thirty."

The tone of the voice of the briefer is as casual as the night life of the espionage agents and as casual as a bus drive. The pilots of the aircraft fly cargos that would horrify the average United States citizen, the person who must pay for the operations of the CIA's airlines. In the seemingly innocent briefing given to pilot Jim are words which may open congressional investigations which will make all other investigations into the U.S. overseas operations seem trivial. Broken down into layman's language, the briefing means, "Jim, fly the C-46 cargo plane to Ban Houie Sai and bring back a load of opium." On a flight between Ban Houie Sai, a town in the center of the "Golden Triangle," the world's richest opium growing region, a C-46 aircraft can carry between 12,000 to 14,000 pounds of opium. On some days, three or four aircraft make such flights out of Ban Houie Sai.

Note About the Author: Del Rosario was an employee of Continental Air Services in 1967. As an "operations assistant" based out of Vientiane, Laos, he was responsible for the monitoring of all flights in Laos for that CIA-financed transport corporation and for the loading and unloading of all cargo. As an associate to a British citizen studying the languages of the Meo and Yao hill tribes in the Golden Triangle, del Rosario was able to learn much about the opium culture of the region. On February 4, 1972, he testified in San Francisco before representatives of the national press and television networks about his observations in Laos. Parts of his testimony will be appearing in the next issue.

SCANDAL



Earth's editor and publisher James Goode charged that the CIA-supported Air America airline is being used to ship opium from CIA bases in Laos and Thailand. Goode cited an article written by University of California professor Peter Dale Scott who said that opium is grown by CIA mercenaries, including the Meo tribesmen, in Southeast Asia. According to Scott, the opium is then shipped from the remote jungle areas aboard Air America planes.

A spokesman for Air America in Washington, D.C. also declined to comment on the story. He would say only that Air America is a "non-domestic airline owned by Americans which operates in Asia." He said he was unaware of any connections between the airline and the CIA.

Earth magazine's March issue accuses the CIA of controlling Air America — and charges that the airline operation is responsible for at least 25 percent of all heroin which reaches the United States.

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EARTH NEWS

Said Goode: "I find it inconceivable that the hierarchy of the CIA and other agencies within our government have not cracked down on this source of smack."

Goode was asked about a suggestion voiced earlier this week by Senator Hubert Humphrey that the CIA be assigned the task of investigating and stopping the flow of illegal heroin.

Del Rosario, a former marine who served in Vietnam in 1964 and 1965, said that the opium growing was permitted by the Laos and Thailand governments as long as there was no outside pressure exerted. He explained that, occasionally, a complaint would be lodged about the amount of growing and smuggling, and that then the government would move in and demand a temporary halt to the opium cultivation.

Earth magazine charged that the Central Intelligence Agency is intimately involved in the smuggling of millions of dollars worth of heroin into the United States each year.

The magazine's editor James Goode announced at a press conference in San Francisco that the March issue of *Earth* documents a web of alliances which connect opium-growing Southeast Asian farmers to the CIA-sponsored Air America Airlines and big money interests in the eastern United States. Goode said that heroin-smuggling entanglements are carefully spelled out in an article written by University of California English professor Peter Dale Scott. Scott's eight-page article traces the connection between opium growers, CIA operatives, flights of CIA-controlled airlines and the eventual delivery of heroin to the U.S.

Goode further charged that the CIA-supported Meo tribesmen and other opium growers located in Southeast Asia's "fertile triangle" are responsible for anywhere "from 25 percent to 80 percent of all heroin traffic reaching the United States."

The magazine editor stated that Scott's article was "clearly the most dramatic documentation of CIA complicity in heroin trafficking yet published," but he added that the CIA's involvement in smack smuggling has been suspected and reported about for years, adding: "Yet nothing has been done."

Goode announced that he was making all of his evidence immediately available to United States Senators — and that he is calling for a Senate investigation of the CIA's role in the underground heroin market.

Studies on the smack problem in the United States have indicated that up to \$5 billion dollars is spent annually on heroin by 500,000 American addicts. More than half of the money spent each year on the purchase of heroin — or \$2.5 billion — is obtained through theft by addicts. Medical authorities report that heroin presently caused more deaths to people between the ages of 18 and 35 than do wars or cancer or car accidents.

"That's like appointing the SS to investigate atrocities at Dachau or Auschwitz," Goode said.

A 28-year-old Seattle resident who worked as a "civilian aide" to Continental Air Services in Thailand and Laos testified in San Francisco that he witnessed opium being loaded aboard CIA-sponsored aircraft.

Enrique B. del Rosario said he watched as cargo, labeled as "miscellaneous," was put aboard Air America planes at the Ban Houie Sai base in Laos, and at two other bases in Thailand. Del Rosario said he had served as a "civilian understudy" at the bases in Southeast Asia between 1966 and 1970.

When asked if he was actually employed at the time by the CIA, del Rosario declined to answer, insisting that he was not "permitted to." He added that his wife and two children are currently in Thailand — and said that he did not want to say anything "which might jeopardize their safety."

However, del Rosario admitted that he had worked very closely with the Meo tribesmen and other CIA-supported tribes, and that he had seen literally "hundreds of acres of cultivated opium fields planted by the tribesmen." Del Rosario said that the opium was later harvested, and that he watched as Air American planes landed at Thai and Laos bases and loaded the "miscellaneous" cargo aboard.

CIA DENIES

The Central Intelligence Agency has refused to comment on charges voiced by *Earth* magazine that the CIA "is deeply involved in the smuggling of heroin into the United States."

A spokesman for the CIA, assistant director Angus Thuermer, insisted to *Earth News* that the intelligence agency "never comments on any charges or complaints made against the CIA." Thuermer added, however, that CIA director Richard Helms had specifically denied any CIA connection to the trafficking of heroin during a speech he made to newspaper editors in Washington, D.C. early last year. At that time, Helms, in reply to charges that the CIA was involved in moving opium from Southeast Asia to the United States, said: "We know we are not contributing to that problem."

(Ed. Note: Further information on CIA involvement in the opium trade is contained in an article by Enrique B. del Rosario in this issue of *THE SOUND*.)

NONE/UNKNOWN